9. Need for abolishing the tax on sites of mosques and cemeteries throughout the State.

Mr. P. K. Kochuvava (Member, Nominated) said that, in olden times, lands for the construction of mosques and cemeteries had, in many instances, been granted tax-free, that such sites were still exempt from the payment of tax and that, on account of the want of funds for all the mosques generally, it had become difficult to pay up the tax imposed on the sites of mosques and cemeteries. As a consequence, steps were not infrequently being taken under the Revenue Recovery Regulation for realisation of the arrears of land revenue by the sale of portions of certain mosque sites. The Government were spending much money for other religious and charitable institutions. Considering the poverty of the mosques, the Member prayed that the tax imposed at the last Settlement on the sites of mosques and cemeteries in the State might be permanently remitted.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

10. Remission of tax on the paddy fields at Ithicara and its suburbs for 1091 and 1092 and payment of damages for the loss caused by the action of the Railway authorities in opening the Paravur bar after the month of Thulam.

Mr. Stephen Joseph (Member, Nominated) represented that the area of paddy cultivation which was affected by the influx of sea-water through the Paravur bar was about 10 square miles, of which the extent of cultivation which suffered annually was 5,000 *paras* of land owned by the ryots of Meenad, Adichanallur, Paravur and Eravipuram. Practically, only one crop was being raised within that area. The annual approximate yield was 40,000 *paras* of paddy. The total loss in paddy for the past two years might be put at 80,000 *paras*, worth about Rs. 60,000. Briefly stated, that was the grievance of the ryots, who had to pay Rs. 2,500 as tax. He requested that, till their difficulties were removed, the land tax might be remitted.

As a remedial measure, the Member had suggested the construction of a wall sufficiently high with a suitable pipe to drive the water out with a velocity. Though the Chief Engineer was convinced of the necessity of some protective measure being taken, nothing had been done till now. The Member then submitted that a continuance of the present attitude of indifference on the part of Government would result in ruinous loss to a large body of ryots. If, the Member added, the proposal submitted by him was considered too costly, he would request that the Chief Engineer might be asked to put the old sluice there into thorough order, as that also would meet their requirements to some extent at least. The chief difficulty of the ryots was that sand at the mouth of the river was being removed by the Railway authorities and consequently the bar had become considerably widened. The sand removed by the Railway authorities being thrown up by the action of the sea, the Member contended that their loss was caused by the Railway authorities and that, as such, they were entitled to the same compensation from the Railway Budget grant as those whose lands had been acquired for the construction of the line. It was also pointed out by the Member that the locality was inspected in 1915 by the Dewan Peishkar in company with the local Revenue officials; but nothing came out of it. So far as this year was concerned, the bar had become closed in the natural way and so the ryots began cultivation. But when they had made good progress, the bar was opened by the Railway authorities with the usual ruinous results which, he added, would continue till the end of 1093. In view of the hardships explained above, the Member prayed that the Chief Engineer might be asked to prepare a scheme by which the influx of salt water could be prevented and the cultivators saved from the resultant loss.

Dewan's reply.—With reference to one of your requests, namely, claim for compensation, I would at once say that it is out of the question. In regard to the other matter, namely, remission of tax, the matter is under consideration. The representations of the Member will be referred to the Peishkar for report, and, on receipt of that Officer's reply, necessary orders will be passed.

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